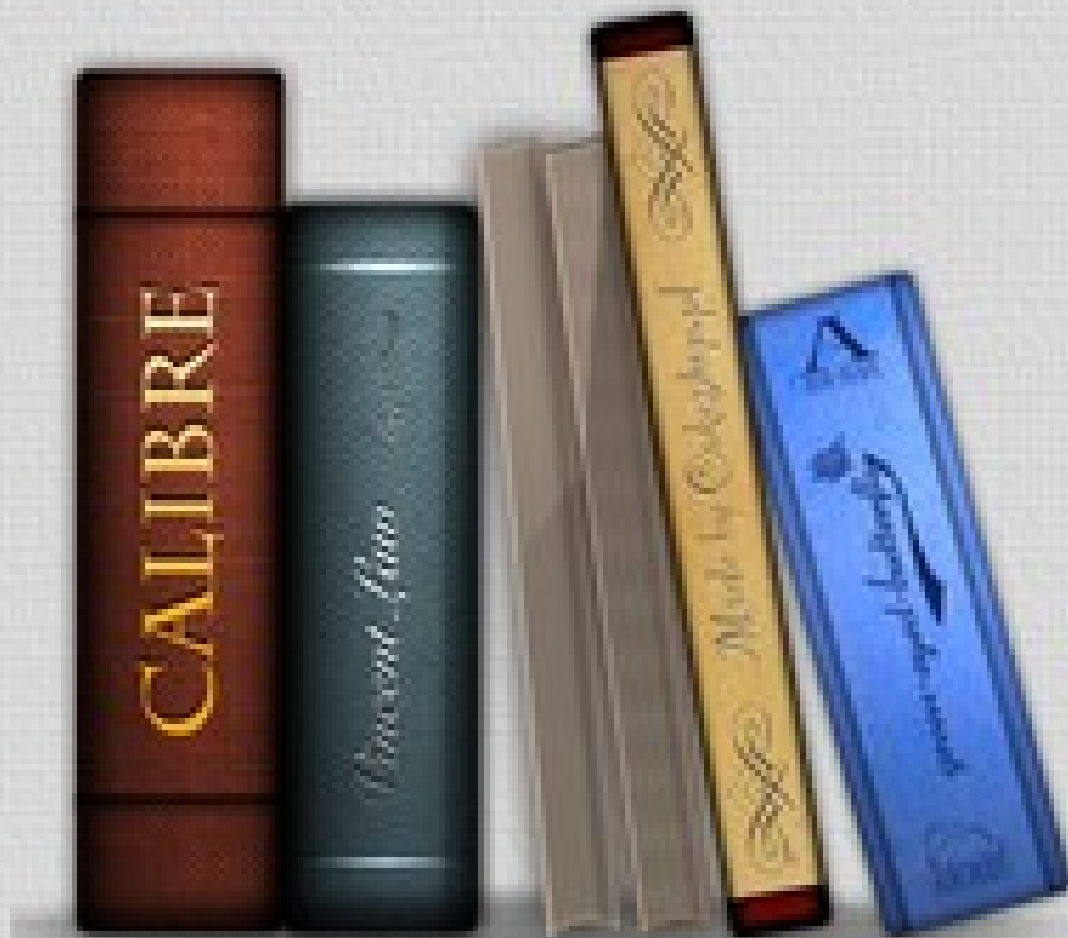


DGuzik 60 1Peter

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(1Pe 1:1)

Salutation

From Peter,¹ an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those temporarily residing² abroad³ (in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, the province of Asia,⁴ and Bithynia) who are chosen⁵
(Guzik)

1Pe 1:1-25

1 Peter 1 - LIVING LIKE YOU ARE BORN AGAIN

A. A greeting from the Apostle Peter.

1. (1Pe_1:1) The writer and the intended readers of this letter.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, a. **Peter** was not only **an apostle**, but there is a sense in which he was the leader of the apostolic group. Peter was an important and an influential man in the early church. This letter would have been received with a sense of importance.

i. "The supreme importance of the apostles is suggested by the fact that the phrase *of Jesus Christ* is attached to no other New Testament office: we do not read of *teachers of Jesus Christ* or *prophets of Jesus Christ* or *evangelists of Jesus Christ*, only of *apostles of Jesus Christ*." (Grudem) b. **To the pilgrims**: The idea behind the word **pilgrims** is of someone who lives as *a temporary resident in a foreign land*. **Pilgrims** are sojourners and travelers, and **pilgrims** live in constant awareness of their true home.

i. The early Christian writing *The Epistle to Diognetus* gives the idea of what **pilgrims** are. "They inhabit the lands of their birth, but as temporary residents of it; they take their

share of all responsibilities as citizens, and endure all disabilities as aliens. Every foreign land is their native land, and every native land a foreign land . . . they pass their days upon earth, but their citizenship is in heaven.” (Cited in Barclay)

c. **To the pilgrims of the Dispersion:** Peter is clearly writing to Gentiles (see 1Pe_1:18; 1Pe_2:10, and 1Pe_4:3). Yet he calls them **pilgrims of the Dispersion**, a name that was applied to the Jews. He calls them this because he sees the Christians of his day as being “sprinkled” throughout the world as the Jewish people were in **the Dispersion**.

d. **Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia:** These specific areas were places Christianity had extended to in the first several decades after the beginning of the church. It is probably the route the original courier of Peter’s letter would follow in distributing the letter. This was not written to any one congregation, but intentionally written to all Christians.

2. (1Pe_1:2) Peter’s description of his readers and all Christians.

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

a. **Elect according to the foreknowledge:** They are **elect**. This means simply that they are *chosen*, chosen by God in a particular and unique sense.

b. Their election is **according to the foreknowledge of God**. God’s choosing is not random or uninformed, but **according** to His **foreknowledge**, which is an aspect of His omniscience. This **foreknowledge** includes prior knowledge of our response to the gospel, but is not solely dependent on it.

i. Though God’s election is **according to . . . foreknowledge**, there is more to His foreknowledge than His prior knowledge of my response to Jesus. Election is not

election at all if it is only a *quid pro quo* arrangement between my choosing and God's.

c. **In sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience:** An essential result of election is **sanctification** and **obedience**.

While some would like to think that election has only to do with going to heaven or hell, Peter reminds us that it touches earth also. A claim to be **elect** is doubtful if there is no evidence of **sanctification** and **obedience**.

d. **And sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:** However, since all the elect fall short of perfect sanctification and obedience, there is cleansing from sin provided for them through the **sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ**.

i. There were only three circumstances in the Old Testament where blood was sprinkled on people. First, at the establishment of a covenant (Exo_24:5-8). Second, at the ordination of Aaron and his sons (Exo_29:21). Finally, in the purification ceremony for a cleansed leper (Lev_14:6-7).

ii. The **sprinkling of the blood of Jesus** on us accomplishes the same things. First, a covenant is formed, then we are ordained as priests to Him, and finally we are cleansed from our corruption and sin. Each one of these things is ours through the work of Jesus on the cross.

e. **God the Father . . . the Spirit . . . Jesus Christ:** Peter's effortless way of combining the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in our salvation displays the New Testament approach to the Trinity. It is not detailed as a specific doctrine, but woven into the warp and woof of the New Testament.

i. Jesus has a **Father**, but not in the sense of being higher than He who gave Him existence. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have existed together throughout eternity, and each are equally God. **Father** and *Son* are terms used to describe the relationship between these first two members of the Trinity.

f. **Grace to you and peace be multiplied:** Peter brings a greeting that had become common among the Christians, combining elements from Greek culture (**Grace**) and Jewish culture (**peace**).

B. What it means to be saved and to live saved.

1. (1Pe_1:3-5) Thanks to the Father for His work of salvation. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

a. **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:** When Peter considers the salvation of God, all he can do is praise Him. This is especially because the motive for God's work is found in Him, not in us (**according to His abundant mercy**).

b. **Has begotten us again:** The wording of **begotten us again** is different from *born again* (Joh_3:3), but the meaning is the same. Peter's idea is that when a person is saved, they are made a *new creation* (2Co_5:17).

c. **To a living hope:** We are born again to **a living hope**, because we have eternal life in a Savior who has conquered death Himself. The hope lives because it is set on an **inheritance incorruptible**, which can never **fade away** because it is **reserved in heaven**. This is a significant contrast to any inheritance on this earth.

d. **Incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away:** Peter doesn't really describe our inheritance. All he can tell us is what it is *not*. What our inheritance actually *is*, is too great for him to describe.

i. Our inheritance is like the inheritance of Aaron (Num_18:20) and the inheritance of the Psalmist (Psa_16:5-6), which is the gift of God Himself. Since God gives Himself to us now, our inheritance begins here and now.

ii. In speaking with those who don't know Jesus, we shouldn't just tell them of the agonies of hell they will experience, but the of the glories of heaven they will miss.

e. **Who are kept by the power of God through faith:** The promise of our inheritance is certain, because we **are kept by the power of God**, ensuring that we will endure **through faith** until the coming of Jesus.

i. We are **kept by the power of God**, but it is **through faith**, meaning our faith. The person who is **kept** is a person abiding in a continuing relationship of **faith** with God. And we need to be **kept**! Keeping is not necessary unless there is danger outside and weakness inside.

ii. "To have been told, as in the preceding verse, that our inheritance was *reserved in heaven* could have yielded us little comfort, unless that assurance had been followed and capped by this, that the heirs also are being kept for its full enjoyment." (Meyer)

f. We cannot experience this inheritance unless we are born again. It would be like rewarding a blind man by showing him the most beautiful sunset or taking him to an art museum. Unregenerate man does not have the *capacity* to enjoy this inheritance.

2. (1Pe_1:6-9) The purpose of trials for those who are saved. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith; the salvation of *your* souls.

a. **In this you greatly rejoice:** We especially **rejoice** in God's keeping power when we are **grieved by various trials**, knowing that He will keep us as our faith is **tested by fire**.

b. **Faith . . . tested by fire:** Our **faith** isn't tested because God doesn't know how much or what kind of faith we have. It is **tested** because *we* often are ignorant of how much or what kind of faith we have. God's purpose in testing is to display the enduring quality of our faith.

i. **Much more precious than gold that perishes:** If **gold** is fit to be tested and purified by fire, how **much more** our faith, which is far **more precious than gold**?

ii. **Gold** is one of the most durable of all materials. But it too will one day perish, but our faith will not.

c. **Receiving the end of your faith:** The **end of your faith** is the return of Jesus and the ultimate **salvation of your souls**. Testing and trials are inevitable as long as we are on this side of **the end of your faith**. As long as we do not see the God we serve, we must endure through trials, and face them with faith and joy.

i. **Whom having not seen you love:** Peter knew that though he had seen Jesus, both before and after the resurrection, most every Christian in the early church had **not seen** Jesus. Yet they loved Him. Jesus was no less real simply because they had not seen Him.

ii. The word translated **joy inexpressible** "occurs only here in the New Testament, and describes a joy so profound as to be beyond the power of words to express." (Grudem)

3. (1Pe_1:10-12) The prior revelation of the salvation experienced by Christians.

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven; things which angels desire to look into.

a. **Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully:** It is important to Peter - and all the New Testament writers - to demonstrate that their teaching was no novelty, but that it was **testified beforehand** by the prophets.

i. The predictions of the sufferings of the Messiah begin with the first prophecy of the Messiah, when God told Eve *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.* (Gen_3:15)

b. **Prophesied of the grace that would come to you:** The prophets of the Old Testament longed to see exactly the **grace** of the New Covenant to come. Prophesying by the **Spirit of Christ**, they knew *something* of His **sufferings** and **glories**, but far less than they longed to know.

i. Can you imagine how excited Isaiah would have been to read the Gospel of John? The Old Testament prophets knew so much, yet much was hidden to them, including the character of the Church (Eph_3:4-6) and the very essence of life and immortality (2Ti_1:10).

c. **To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering:** The prophets understood that **they were ministering** to people beyond them, as well as to people in their own day. These things the prophets predicted were reported as fact by the apostles (**the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel**).

i. Because we know the *Who* (Jesus) and the *when* (Jesus' day) of these Old Testament prophecies, they should be of far more interest to us than they were even in the day of the prophets.

d. **Things which angels desire to look into:** The unfolding of God's eternal plan is something that **angels desire to look into**. Angels observe our conduct (1Co_4:9), making it necessary that Christians conduct themselves properly (1Co_11:10).

i. Part of God's eternal purpose is to show His wisdom to the angelic beings through His work with the church (Eph_3:10-11). God *wants* the angels to look in on what He does in the church.

ii. "The longing must therefore include a holy curiosity to watch and delight in the glories of Christ's kingdom as they find ever fuller realization in their lives of individual Christians throughout the history of the church."

(Grudem)

4. (1Pe_1:13-17) The conduct of the saved.

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; a. **Therefore gird up the loins of your mind:** Living the way God wants us to means that we must **gird up the loins** of our **mind**. The idea in this phrase is of preparing for action, much like our phrase "rolling up your sleeves." Then, we must also be **sober**, which means the ability to take a serious look at life.

b. **Rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ:** Peter has told us a lot about God's grace. He greeted us with grace (1Pe_1:2). He told us of the grace that came to us in Jesus, predicted by the prophets of old (1Pe_1:10). Now he goes further, writing of **the grace that is to be brought to you** when Jesus comes back. The only way we will be able to stand before Jesus on that day is because of the *unmerited favor* He gives and will give to us.

i. **Grace** isn't just for the past, when we first gave our lives to Jesus. It isn't only for the present, where we live each moment standing in His grace (Rom_5:2). It is also for the

future, when **grace** will be **brought to us**. God has only just begun to show us the riches of His grace!

ii. “*Grace* is the unmerited love of God, stooping to save and bless; the source of all those bright and holy gifts which come from his infinite heart.” (Meyer)

c. **As obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance:** Fulfilling God’s call to holiness requires that we, **as obedient children**, break off with the lifestyle of the world (characterized by **lusts** and **ignorance**).

d. **But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy”** : The main idea behind *holiness* is not moral purity but it is the idea of “*apartness*.” The idea is that God is *separate*, different from His creation, both in His essential nature and in the perfection of His attributes. But instead of building a wall around His apartness, God calls us to come to Him and share His apartness. He says to us, “**Be holy, for I am holy.**”

i. When we refuse to see God’s apartness, we begin to believe that He is just a “super-man.” Then we don’t see that His love is a **holy** love, His justice is a **holy** justice, and so on with all of His attributes. Holiness is not so much something we possess, as it is something that possesses us.

e. **And if you call on the Father:** If we, as Christians, **call on** a holy God (presumably for help), we must understand we call on a God who shows no **partiality** - and will so judge our conduct, making a working, sober, holy walk all the more important.

5. (1Pe_1:18-21) The motivation for godly living.

Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times

for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

a. **Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things:** The high call for godly living makes sense in light of the price that was paid for our redemption. We weren't saved by the precious blood of Jesus to then live as if we were garbage.

b. **From your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers:** Peter describes a justification by law way of thinking as **aimless conduct**. It seems to have an aim - gaining merit before God by works - but it is in fact **aimless** because it cannot succeed.

c. **A lamb without blemish and without spot:** Peter here speaks to the completely sinless character of Jesus. If He were not **without blemish and without spot**, He could not have been qualified to be our Redeemer.

d. **He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world:** The work of Jesus was not a plan developed late in the course of redemption. It **was foreordained before the foundation of the world**, though it was made evident **in these last times**.

e. **For you who through Him believe in God:** The entire plan of redemption is for those who **believe in God**, though even their belief is **through Him**. Those who **believe in God** are not disappointed, because their faith and hope has been substantiated by Jesus' resurrection **from the dead**.

6. (1Pe_1:22-25) The necessity for love among the saved.

Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because "All flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of

the LORD endures forever.” Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

a. **Love one another fervently:** Holy living is incomplete if it isn't accompanied by **love**. To be a Christian means to have a **sincere love of the brethren**, but we are encouraged to exercise that love **fervently**.

b. **Love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again:** Such love is only possible (and only to be expected) of those who have been **born again** by the eternal word of God.

i. Again, Peter does not use the same wording for **born again** as is found in John 3. But he does use the exact same idea.

c. **Through the word of God which lives and abides forever:** We are **born again . . . through the word of God**.

But it doesn't only give us new life. It also tells us to **love one another**. If the word of God is as Isa_40:8 says it is - **the word of the Lord which endures forever**, then we are both obligated by it, and empowered by it, to live out the kind of love and holiness Peter speaks of.

d. **Through the word of God . . . Now this is the word:** Some people try to draw a sharp distinction between the two Greek words most often translated **word**, which are the ancient Greek words *rhema* and *logos*. But here, Peter uses both words (*logos* in 1Pe_1:23 and *rhema* in 1Pe_1:25) to refer to the exact same idea. The two words sometimes have subtle differences, but not significant differences.

(1Pe 1:2) according to the foreknowledge of God the Father by being set apart by the Spirit for obedience and for sprinkling⁶ with Jesus Christ's blood. May grace and peace be yours in full measure!⁷

(1Pe 1:3) ***New Birth to Joy and Holiness***

Blessed be⁸ the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he gave us new birth into a living hope

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (1Pe 1:4) that is,⁹ into¹⁰ an inheritance imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. It is reserved in heaven for you, (1Pe 1:5) who by God's power are protected through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

(1Pe 1:6) This brings you great joy,¹¹ although you may have to suffer¹² for a short time in various trials.

(1Pe 1:7) Such trials show the proven character of your faith,¹³ which is much more valuable than gold — gold that is tested by fire, even though it is passing away¹⁴ — and will bring praise¹⁵ and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.¹⁶

(1Pe 1:8) You¹⁷ have not seen him, but you love him. You¹⁸ do not see him now but you believe in him, and so you rejoice¹⁹ with an indescribable and glorious²⁰ joy, (1Pe 1:9) because you are attaining the goal of your faith — the salvation of your souls.

(1Pe 1:10) Concerning this salvation,²¹ the prophets²² who predicted the grace that would come to you²³ searched and investigated carefully.

(1Pe 1:11) They probed²⁴ into what person or time²⁵ the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating when he testified beforehand about the sufferings appointed for Christ²⁶ and his subsequent glory.²⁷

(1Pe 1:12) They were shown²⁸ that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things now announced to you through those who proclaimed the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things angels long to catch a glimpse of.

(1Pe 1:13) Therefore, get your minds ready for action²⁹ by being fully sober, and set your hope³⁰ completely on the grace that will be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed.³¹

(1Pe 1:14) Like obedient children, do not comply with³² the evil urges you used to follow in your ignorance,³³

(1Pe 1:15) but, like the Holy One who called you, become holy yourselves in all of your conduct,

(1Pe 1:16) for it is written, "***You shall be holy, because I am holy.***"³⁴

(1Pe 1:17) And if you address as Father the one who impartially judges according to each one's work, live out the time of your temporary residence here³⁵ in reverence.

(1Pe 1:18) You know that from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors you were ransomed — not by perishable things like silver or gold, (1Pe 1:19) but by precious blood like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, namely Christ.

(1Pe 1:20) He was foreknown³⁶ before the foundation of the world but³⁷ was manifested in these last times³⁸ for your sake.

(1Pe 1:21) Through him you now trust³⁹ in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

(1Pe 1:22) You have purified⁴⁰ your souls by obeying the truth⁴¹ in order to show sincere mutual love.⁴² So⁴³ love one another earnestly from a pure heart.⁴⁴

(1Pe 1:23) You have been born anew, not from perishable but from imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

(1Pe 1:24) For

all flesh ⁴⁵ ***is like grass:***

and all its glory like the flower of the grass; ⁴⁶

the grass withers and the flower falls off,

(1Pe 1:25) ***but the word of the Lord*** ⁴⁷ ***endures forever.*** ⁴⁸

And this is the word that was proclaimed to you.

(1Pe 2:1) So get rid of¹ all evil and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.

(Guzik)

1Pe 2:1-25

1 Peter 2 - THE GLORY AND THE DUTY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

A. Coming to Jesus through His word.

1. (1Pe_2:1-3) How to respond to the eternal word of God.

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

a. **Therefore:** Peter has just demonstrated the glory and eternal character of God's word. Now, **therefore**, in light of what God's word is to us, we should receive the word, and receive it with a particular heart.

b. **As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word:** **Desire** is a strong word. In the Septuagint, an ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, it is used for man's deepest longing for God: *As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God* (Psa_42:1).

i. **Babes . . . desire:** A healthy new baby has an instinctive yearning for its mother's milk. When things are right, you don't have to tell it to want the milk.

c. **That you may grow thereby:** The word of God is necessary for the growth of the Christian. We should all **desire the pure milk of the word**, even though Paul rebukes the Corinthians for being able to *only* receive milk (1Co_3:1-2), the Christian should *never* get tired of the simple truths of the gospel simply presented.

i. Who are the **newborn babes**? In a sense, we all are. "The most advanced among us, in knowledge and attainment, are, in comparison with what they shall be, only as babes." (Meyer)

ii. "To drink the milk of the Word is to 'taste' again and again what he is like, for in the hearing of the Lord's words believers experience the joy of personal fellowship with the Lord himself." (Grudem)

d. However, to grow by the word, we must receive it with a certain attitude of heart: **laying aside all malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking**. This is a humble, honest, heart, willing to *do* what the word of God says.

i. **Evil speaking**: This ancient Greek word has more the idea of spicy, hurtful gossip than the idea of profane speech.

e. **If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious**: If we have received from God, if we have **tasted** (personally experienced) **that the Lord is gracious**, then we have all the more reason and responsibility to receive the word in the enthusiastic way that babies receive their milk.

2. (1Pe_2:4-5) Coming to Jesus.

Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

a. **Coming to Him as to a living stone**: Peter's picture here is that God is building a spiritual temple (**a spiritual house**) using **living stones** (Christians), those who have come to the ultimate **Living Stone** (Jesus).

b. This **spiritual house** shows that as much as Israel had a temple, Christians also have one. But the Christian's temple is **spiritual**, and they themselves are the temple.

c. **Chosen by God and precious**: As much as Israel was chosen by God, so is the church. As much as they had a priesthood, so Christians are a **holy priesthood**. And as much as they have sacrifices, so Christians **offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God**.

i. **A holy priesthood**: The believer is his own priest before God. He does not need any mediator except his great High Priest, Jesus. "There can no longer be an elite priesthood with claims of special access to God, or special privileges in worship or in fellowship with God." (Grudem)

ii. Peter's idea isn't that God has abandoned Israel or that they have no place in His redemptive plan, but that

Christianity is in no way inferior to Judaism

d. **To offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ:** God does the work of building (**being built**), but we do the job of offering sacrifices pleasing to Him, as we come to Jesus as who we are - **living stones**, made by Him.

i. Even a living stone cannot build something great for God as it sits all on its own. What God does in us *together* is important. He is building something out of us *together*.

ii. We can only serve as priests as we do it **through Jesus Christ**. In ourselves, we have no priestly authority, but only in Jesus.

3. (1Pe_2:6-8) The glory of the Chief Cornerstone.

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, *He is* precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

a. **Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone:** If we are being built into a *spiritual house*, there is no doubt who our **Chief Cornerstone** is. Even though men **rejected** Him, He has become the **Chief Cornerstone** in the work of building the church.

i. Jesus is the cornerstone of Psalms 118; the stumbling stone of Isaiah 8; the foundation stone of Isaiah 28; the supernatural stone of Daniel 2; and the rock that gave Israel water in the wilderness (1Co_10:4).

b. **The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone:** Those who reject the Chief Cornerstone, refusing to build on Him, instead **stumble** over Him. Instead of being their salvation, Jesus becomes to them **a rock of offense**.

i. Jesus quoted this passage from Psalms 118 in regard to Himself (Mat_21:42).

c. **They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed:** It is **appointed** that those who are **disobedient to the word** should stumble over Jesus. When Jesus spoke of Himself as the **stone** of Psalms 118, He spoke of what those who rejected Him are **appointed** to: *And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.* (Mat_21:44) 4. (1Pe_2:9-10) The privileged place of God's people.

But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

a. **But you are a chosen generation:** The things that once exclusively belonged to Israel - their election (**chosen**), **priesthood**, and calling, are now no longer the property of Israel alone. These are now the property of every Christian, and we have them in a greater, spiritual sense.

i. We are **a royal priesthood**. The offices of *royalty* and **priesthood** were jealously separated in Israel, but Jesus, who is our King and Priest, has brought them together for His people.

b. **His own special people:** We are **special** because we belong to God. A museum may be filled with quite ordinary things: hats, canes, shoes, and so forth; but they are significant because they once belonged to someone famous. God takes ordinary people, and because He has taken them, they are **special**.

i. These same titles were applied to Israel (Exo_19:5-6, Deu_4:20, Deu_7:6, and Isa_43:20-21). Now, in Jesus, we belong to God as **His own special people**.

c. **Who once were not a people but are now the people of God:** We once were without these privileges, and were not even **a people** before God. We had not seen the mercy of God, but **now have obtained mercy**.

i. In our culture, with its Christian foundations, we don't understand the tremendous sense of privilege and relief that came to Gentiles as they were able to share in the New Covenant with the God of Israel. Peter's message is nonetheless wonderful: "You didn't used to belong, but now you belong to God and among God's people."

d. **That you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light:** The purpose for these high privileges is not so we can grow proud, but so that we can **proclaim the praises of Him** who has done such great things for us.

B. How those who have come to Jesus are to live.

1. (1Pe_2:11-12) When we come to Jesus, we are to abstain from fleshly lusts.

Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by *your* good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

a. **Abstain from fleshly lusts:** We can only **abstain from fleshly lusts** as we live **as sojourners and pilgrims**, as those who recognize that this world is not their home, and that they have a home and a citizenship in heaven.

b. **Which war against the soul:** Peter understands that these **fleshly lusts . . . war against the soul**. To be a Christian means to fight against the lusts of the flesh, and the battle continues as long as we live in this flesh.

i. It is easy for us to see how the pursuit of fleshly lusts can destroy our body physically. Just ask the alcoholic dying of liver disease, or ask the sexually immoral person with AIDS or one of the 350,000 people on this earth who contracted a

sexually transmitted disease in the last 24 hours. But Peter reminds us that fleshly lusts also **war against the soul**. Some escape disease in the physical body when they sin, but the disease and death of the inner man is a penalty that no one given over to the flesh escapes.

c. **Having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles:** This kind of godly living makes our conduct **honorable among** those who don't know God yet. Though we can expect that they will **speak against you as evildoers**, they can still be brought to **glorify God** by seeing our godly conduct.

i. Christians were falsely accused of great crimes in the early church. Pagans said that at communion Christians ate the flesh and drank the blood of a baby in a cannibalistic ritual. They said that Christian "agape feasts" were wild orgies. They said that Christians were antisocial because they did not participate in society's immoral entertainment. They said that Christians were atheists because they did not worship idols.

ii. But over time, it was clear that Christians were not immoral people - and it was shown by their lives. "The striking fact of history is that by their lives the Christians actually did defeat the slanders of the heathen. In the early part of the third century Celsus made the most famous and the most systematic attack of all upon the Christians in which he accused them of ignorance and foolishness and superstition and all kinds of things - *but never of immorality.*" (Barclay)

d. **The day of visitation:** This is probably a reference to their ultimate meeting with God, either when they go to meet Him, or when He comes to meet them. The idea is that they might be persuaded to become Christians by seeing the lives of other Christians, and that they would **glorify God** when they meet Him instead of cowering before His holy judgment.

2. (1Pe_2:13-17) When we come to Jesus, we are to show proper submission to the government.

Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the* praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

a. **Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man:** As Christians, we should be good citizens, submitting to government. This was very different groups of zealous Jews in that day who recognized no king but God and paid taxes to no one but God.

b. We do this **for the Lord's sake**. Since governments have a rightful authority from God, we are bound to obey them -

unless, of course, they order us to do something in contradiction to God's law. Then, we are commanded to obey God before man (Act_4:19).

i. Peter wrote this in the days of the Roman Empire, which was no democracy, and no special friend to Christians.

Yet he still recognizes the legitimate authority of the Roman government.

c. **As to those who are sent by him:** Peter also insists that *governors* are **sent by him**, that is, **sent by** God.

Governments are sent by God for the **punishment of evildoers** and for the recognition of those who do good.

i. God uses governing authorities as a check upon man's sinful desires and tendencies. Governments are a useful tool in resisting the effects of man's fallen nature.

ii. The greatest offense government can make is to fail to punish evildoers, or to reward evildoers through corruption.

d. **That by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:** Peter knows that our conduct is a way to defend the gospel. He knows that those who never read the Bible will read our lives, so it is by **doing good** that we **put to silence the ignorance of foolish men**.

e. **Yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God:** We are warned against taking the **liberty** we have in Jesus as an excuse for sin. Instead, we use our **liberty** in Jesus to show the kind of love and respect that Peter calls for.

3. (1Pe_2:18-20) When we come to Jesus, we are to show proper submission to our employers.

Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God.

a. **Servants, be submissive to your masters:** The command to submit to masters isn't just to those who work for masters who are **good and gentle**, but also to those who are **harsh**. If we must endure hardship because of our Christian standards, it is **commendable** before God.

b. **For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently?** To be punished for our wrongs is no **credit** to us. But when we are punished for doing good, and endure it **patiently**, we are complimented **before God**.

i. "Our case is like that of a criminal who had better bear quietly a sentence for a crime he has not committed, lest by too much outcry he induce investigation into a list of offenses, which are not charged against him, because they are not known." (Meyer)

4. (1Pe_2:21-25) The example of Jesus.

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: “Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth”; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

a. **Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example:** Jesus is our **example** as someone who endured punishment unjustly. When **He was reviled**, Jesus **did not revile in return**, but in His sufferings, He **committed Himself** to the Father.

b. **Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree:** The glorious result of Jesus’ work is that He paid for our sins, and provided for our healing (**by whose stripes you were healed**).

i. **Tree** is literally *wood*. Jesus *bore our sins in His own body on the wood* - the wood of the cross.

ii. With **by whose stripes you were healed**, Peter quotes Isa_53:5, which primarily refers to spiritual healing, but also definitely includes physical healing. The provision for our healing (both physically and spiritually) is made by the sufferings (**stripes**) of Jesus. The physical aspect of our healing is received in part now, but only completely with our resurrection.

iii. In context, we see that Peter’s main point is that if we are treated unjustly by a master, we don’t fear whatever harm he causes. We can be healed and restored by Jesus’ suffering for us.

c. **For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls:** If not for Jesus’ patient endurance under the persecution of the ungodly, we would still be **going astray**.

But because of His work for us, we have returned to our **Shepherd** (pastor) and the **Overseer** (bishop) of our souls. (1Pe 2:2) And² yearn³ like newborn infants for pure, spiritual milk,⁴ so that by it you may grow up to⁵ salvation,⁶ (1Pe 2:3) if ***you have experienced 7 the Lord's kindness.*** ⁸

(1Pe 2:4) ***A Living Stone, a Chosen People***

So as you come to him,⁹ a living stone rejected by men but¹⁰ chosen and priceless¹¹ in God's sight, (1Pe 2:5) you yourselves, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood and to offer¹² spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

(1Pe 2:6) For it says¹³ in scripture, "***Look, I lay in Zion a stone, a chosen and priceless cornerstone, 14 and whoever believes 15 in him 16 will never 17 be put to shame.***"¹⁸

(1Pe 2:7) So you who believe see¹⁹ his value,²⁰ but for those who do not believe, ***the stone that the builders rejected has become the 21 cornerstone,*** ²²

(1Pe 2:8) and ***a stumbling-stone 23 and a rock to trip over.*** ²⁴ They stumble²⁵ because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.²⁶

(1Pe 2:9) But you are *a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own*, so that you may *proclaim the virtues* ²⁷ of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

(1Pe 2:10) You²⁸ once were ***not a people***, but now you are God's people. You were ***shown no mercy,*** ²⁹ but now you have received mercy.

(1Pe 2:11) Dear friends, I urge you as foreigners and exiles to keep away from fleshly desires that do battle against the soul, (1Pe 2:12) and maintain good conduct³⁰ among the

non-Christians,³¹ so that though³² they now malign you as wrongdoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God when he appears.³³

(1Pe 2:13) ***Submission to Authorities***

Be subject to every human institution³⁴ for the Lord's sake, whether to a king as supreme

(1Pe 2:14) or to governors as those he commissions³⁵ to punish wrongdoers and praise³⁶ those who do good.

(1Pe 2:15) For God wants you³⁷ to silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good.

(1Pe 2:16) Live³⁸ as free people, not using your freedom as a pretext for evil, but as God's slaves.³⁹

(1Pe 2:17) Honor all people, love the family of believers,⁴⁰ fear God, honor the king.

(1Pe 2:18) Slaves,⁴¹ be subject⁴² to your masters with all reverence, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are perverse.

(1Pe 2:19) For this finds God's favor,⁴³ if because of conscience toward God⁴⁴ someone endures hardships in suffering unjustly.

(1Pe 2:20) For what credit is it if you sin and are mistreated and endure it? But if you do good and suffer and so endure, this finds favor with God.⁴⁵

(1Pe 2:21) For to this you were called, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example for you to follow in his steps.

(1Pe 2:22) He⁴⁶ ***committed no sin nor was deceit found in his mouth.***⁴⁷

(1Pe 2:23) When he was maligned, he⁴⁸ did not answer back; when he suffered, he threatened⁴⁹ no retaliation,⁵⁰ but committed himself to God⁵¹ who judges justly.

(1Pe 2:24) He⁵² ***himself bore our sins*** ⁵³ in his body on the tree, that we may cease from sinning⁵⁴ and live for righteousness. ***By***

his⁵⁵ ***wounds*** ⁵⁶ ***you were healed.***⁵⁷

(1Pe 2:25) For you were ***going astray like sheep*** 58 but now you have turned back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

(1Pe 3:1) ***Wives and Husbands***

In the same way, wives, be subject to your own husbands. Then,¹ even if some are disobedient to the word, they will be won over without a word by the way you live,²

(Guzik)

1Pe 3:1-22

1 Peter 3 - SUBMISSION AND SUFFERING

A. Submission in the home.

1. (1Pe_3:1-2) The heart of a godly wife.

Wives, likewise, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear.

a. **Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands:** The godly wife will **be submissive** to her husband. This submission isn't a reward for the husband's good behavior, it is commanded by God as the proper order for the home.

i. The teaching about submission was especially relevant to a first century married woman who would come to Jesus. She would ask questions such as "Should I leave my husband?" or "Should I change my behavior towards him?" or "Should I assume a superior position in Jesus?"

ii. In the culture of the ancient world, it was almost unthinkable for a wife to adopt a different religion than her husband. Christian women who came to Jesus before their husbands needed instruction.

b. **Likewise:** Proper submission in the home follows the same principles of submission as towards government or our employers. It is a submission not only of the actions, but also of the heart - as demonstrated by the surrendering heart of Jesus (1Pe_2:21-25).

i. The call for submission is not merely a call for love and considerate action. It is a call to relate in submission to authority. The term *submission* is used outside the New Testament to describe the submission and obedience of soldiers in an army to those of superior rank. It literally means “to order under.”

ii. Yet, submission to authority can be totally consistent with *equality* in importance, dignity, and honor. Jesus was subject to both His parents and to God the Father, but was not lower than either of them. “Thus the command to wives to be subject to their husbands should never be taken to imply inferior personhood or spirituality, or lesser importance.” (Grudem)

iii. Of course, submission in marriage follows the same principles as submission in other spheres. We submit to God appointed authority as our obligation before God, unless that authority directs us to sin. In that case, it is right to obey God rather than men (Act_4:19-20).

c. **Be submissive to your own husbands:** Peter carefully observes that wives are called to submit to their **own husbands**, not to men in general. Male headship is a principle of God for the home and the church, not for society in general.

i. The principle of submission is presented in many different ways in the New Testament.

- Jesus submitted to His parents (Luk_2:51).
- Demons submitted to the disciples (Luk_10:17).
- Citizens should submit to government authority (Rom_13:1 and Rom_13:5, Tit_3:1, 1Pe_2:13).
- The universe will submit to Jesus (1Co_15:27 and Eph_1:22).
- Unseen spiritual beings submit to Jesus (1Pe_3:22).
- Christians should submit to church leaders (1Co_16:15-16 and 1Pe_5:5).
- Wives should submit to husbands (Col_3:18, Tit_2:5, 1Pe_3:5, and Eph_5:22-24).

- The church should submit to Jesus (Eph_5:24).
 - Servants should submit to masters (Tit_2:9 and 1Pe_2:18).
 - Christians should submit to God (Heb_12:9 and Jam_4:7).
- ii. None of these relations are reversed. For example, masters are never told to submit to servants, Jesus is never told to submit to the church, and so forth.

d. **That even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives:** The benefit of submission is shown in the way that it affects husbands for God. A wife's submission is a powerful expression of her trust in God. This kind of faith and obedience can accomplish great things, even **without a word**.

i. Wives may want to shape their husbands - either to Christ or in Christ - through their words. Peter reminds them that God's plan is that wives impact their husbands not through persuasive lectures, but through godly submission, **chaste conduct**, and the **fear** of God.

ii. There is a sense in which a wife's efforts to shape her husband through her own words and efforts may hinder the power of God's working on the husband. It is much more effective it is to submit God's way, demonstrating trust in Him, and to let *God* have his way with the husband.

iii. "The attractiveness of a wife's submissive behaviour even to an unbelieving husband suggests that God has inscribed the rightness and beauty of role distinctions include male leadership or headship in the family and female acceptance of and responsiveness to that leadership . . . The unbelieving husband sees this behaviour and deep within perceives the beauty of it. Within his heart there is a witness that this is right, this is how God intended men and women to relate as husband as wife. He concludes, therefore, that the gospel which his wife believes must be true as well." (Grudem)

e. **Do not obey the word:** This refers to an unbelieving husband, but it is a stronger idea than merely "do not believe." It has the idea of someone in active disobedience

to God's word. Even these husbands can be won through the godly conduct of loving wives.

2. (1Pe_3:3-4) The true beauty of a godly woman.

Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward; arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel; rather *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

a. **Do not let your adornment be merely outward:** Peter does forbid all **adornment**. But for the godly woman, **outward** adornment is always in moderation, and her emphasis is always on *inward* adornment.

i. **Arranging the hair:** In the world Peter lived in, women arranged and dyed their hair. They also wore wigs, especially blonde wigs, made with hair imported from Germany. All this **adornment** is **merely outward**. Peter does not forbid a woman fixing her hair, or wearing jewelry, any more than he forbids her wearing **apparel** (*fine* is not in the original).

b. **Rather let it be the hidden person of the heart:** Real beauty comes from the **hidden person of the heart**. It isn't something you wear or primp for. It is something you *are*.

i. The real question is "What do you depend on to make yourself beautiful?" Peter's point is not that any of these are forbidden, but that they should not be a woman's **adornment**, her source of beauty.

c. **The incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit:** The inner beauty of a godly woman is **incorruptible**. This means that it does not decay or get worse with age. Instead, **incorruptible beauty** only gets better with age, and is of so much more value than the beauty that comes from the hair, jewelry, or clothing.

d. **A gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God:** Peter describes the character of true beauty - **a gentle and quiet spirit**. These character traits

are not promoted for women by our culture, they are **very precious in the sight of God**.

3. (1Pe_3:5-6) Examples of submission.

For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

a. **In former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves:** Peter reminds women that he doesn't call them to a new standard, but something that was practiced by **holy women of former times**.

b. **Who trusted in God:** When women submit to their husbands, and when they do not put trust in their outward adornment, they are like the holy women of former times who **trusted in God**. They powerfully demonstrate their faith.

i. A woman can trust her ability to influence and control her husband, or she can trust God and *be submissive*. A woman can trust her outward adornment, or she can trust God and cultivate *a gentle and quiet spirit*. It all comes back to trust in God, so she should be like **the holy women who trusted in God**.

c. **As Sarah obeyed Abraham:** Sarah's submission to Abraham was demonstrated by two things. First, she **obeyed** Abraham, even when it was difficult and he was wrong (as in Gen_12:10-20). Second, she *honored* Abraham by **calling him lord**. It is possible to *obey* someone without showing them the *honor* that is part of submission. True submission knows the place of both *obedience* and *honor*.

i. "An attitude of submission to a husband's authority will be reflected in numerous words and actions each day which reflect deference to his leadership and an acknowledgment of his final responsibility." (Grudem)

d. **If you do good and are not afraid with any terror:** True submission, full of faith in God, has no room for fear or

terror. It does good and leaves the result to God, not man.

i. **Do good** reminds us that true submission is not a sulking surrender to authority. It is an active embrace of God's will, demonstrating trust in Him.

4. (1Pe_3:7) The heart of a godly husband.

Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

a. **Dwell with them:** A godly husband abides with his wife. He doesn't merely share a house, but he truly lives with her. He recognizes the great point of Paul's teaching on marriage in Ephesians 5 : that *husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself* (Eph_5:28). The godly husband understands the *essential unity* God has established between husband and wife.

b. **With understanding:** A godly husband undertakes the important job of **understanding** his wife. By knowing her well, he is able to demonstrate his love for her far more effectively.

i. When a husband has this **understanding**, God directs him to use it, to **dwell with** his wife **with understanding**. He is supposed to take his **understanding** and apply it in daily life with his wife. This is where many men have trouble following through. They may *have understanding* about their wives, but they don't use it as they **dwell with them**.

c. **Giving honor:** A godly husband knows how to make his wife feel honored. Though she submits to him, he takes care that she does not feel like she is an employee or under dictator.

i. In **giving honor to the wife**, the word in the ancient Greek language for **the wife** is a rare word, meaning more literally "the feminine one." It suggests that the woman's feminine nature should prompt the husband to honor her.

ii. This was a *radical* teaching in the world Peter lived in. In that ancient culture, a husband had absolute rights over his wife, and the wife had virtually no rights in the marriage. In the Roman world, if a man caught his wife in an act of adultery, he could kill her on the spot. But if a wife caught her husband, she could do nothing against him.

All the duties and obligations in marriage were put on the wife. Peter's radical teaching is that the *husband* has God-ordained duties and obligations toward his wife.

d. **As to the weaker vessel:** In this context, **weaker** speaks of the woman's relative physical weakness in comparison to men. Men aren't necessarily stronger spiritually than women, but they are generally stronger physically. As Peter brought in the idea of the woman's feminine nature with the words **the wife**, he continues in appreciating the feminine nature and how a husband should respond to it.

i. Therefore, a godly husband recognizes whatever limitations his wife has physically, and he does not expect more from her than is appropriate.

e. **Heirs together:** A godly husband realizes that his spouse is not only his wife, but his sister in Jesus. Part of their inheritance in the Lord is only realized in their oneness as husband and wife.

i. **Heirs together:** This "reminds husbands that even though they have been given great authority within marriage, their wives are still equal to them in spiritual privilege and eternal importance: they are 'joint heirs.'"

(Grudem)

f. **That your prayers may not be hindered:** The failure to live as a godly husband has spiritual consequences. It can and it will hinder prayer.

i. Some have thought that Peter has in mind here the **prayers** that husbands and wives pray together. But since he addresses husbands only, and because he says **your prayers**, he is referring to the prayers of husbands.

B. Godliness in suffering.

1. (1Pe_3:8-9) A plea for unity and love among God's people. Finally, all *of you be* of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, *be* tenderhearted, *be* courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

a. **Be of one mind**: Most of us are willing to have **one mind**, as long as that **one mind** is *my mind*! But the **one mind** is to be *the mind of Christ* (1Co_2:16). Our common **mind** is to be Jesus' mind.

i. This command brings us back to the need to know God's word. We can't **be of one mind**, the mind of Jesus, if we don't know what His mind is. The word of God shows us the mind of Jesus.

b. **Be of one mind** speaks to the essential *unity* of God's people. We are one; but we are not all the same. While we should all **be of one mind**, we can't expect everyone to be like us. God has built both unity and diversity among His people.

i. Every cell of your body is different, and each one has its role to play. But every cell in your body has the same DNA code written in it, the master plan for the whole body. Every cell in your body has the same "mind."

ii. We could say that Christians are to be like a choir. Each one sings with their own voice, and some sing different parts, but everyone sings to the same music and in harmony with one another.

c. **Having compassion . . . tenderhearted . . . courteous**: Peter describes the kind of warm love that should be among the people of God. We should be compassionate, brotherly, tenderhearted and even polite. Christians should treat each other with love!

i. Remember that this was the measure Jesus gave to the world to identify His true disciples: *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another*

(Joh_13:35). Jesus did not command us to like our brothers and sisters in Christ. But we are commanded to love them, and once we start loving them, we will start liking them.

d. **Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing:** The greatest challenge to our love for others comes when we are wronged. At those times, we are called to not return **evil for evil**, but to give a **blessing** instead.

i. No dispute, argument, or personality conflict among believers should linger. Even if one Christian gets out of line, the loving response of other Christians should keep the problem small and short-lived.

ii. The natural response to hostility is retaliation. This is what the terrible ethnic conflicts all over the world are all about - one group wrongs another, and dedicates the rest of its existence to repaying that wrong. Only the love of Jesus for our enemies can break that terrible cycle.

iii. Jesus reminded us that it is no great credit if we love those who love us in return; the real test of love is to demonstrate compassion to our enemies (Mat_5:44-47).

e. **That you may inherit a blessing:** We love one another, but not only for the sake of Jesus, whose body we are members of. We love one another, but not only for the sake of our brother or sister for whom Jesus died. We also love one another for our own sake - by blessing those who have wronged us, we will **inherit a blessing**. If you can't love for the sake of Jesus, or for the sake of your brother, then do it for your own sake!

2. (1Pe_3:10-12) A quotation from Psa_34:12-16 demonstrates the blessing that comes to those who turn away from evil and do good.

For "He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD *are* on

the righteous, and His ears *are open* to their prayers; but the face of the LORD *is* against those who do evil.”

a. **Let him turn away from evil and do good:** Doing good is often difficult because as a general rule, evil is rewarded immediately, and the reward of doing good is often delayed. But the rewards of good are better, and far more secure than the rewards of doing evil. God promises this in the passage quoted by Peter.

3. (1Pe_3:13-17) How to handle it when our good is returned with evil.

And who *is* he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, *you are* blessed. “And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.” But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For *it is* better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

a. **And who is he who harm you:** Though Peter says that Christians should always answer evil with good, he also lives in the real world, he knows that people will often answer our good with evil.

i. “Not to be hated by the world; to be loved and flattered and caressed by the world - is one of the most terrible positions in which a Christian can find himself. ‘What bad thing have I done,’ asked the ancient sage, ‘that he should speak well of me?’” (Meyer)

b. **If you become followers of what is good:** Literally, **become followers** is “be zealous.” “Some Jews were zealots, boasting their zeal for the Lord or His Law . . . *all* Christians should be *zealots for that which is good.* ” (Hart)

c. **But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed:** Peter reminds us that there is even

blessing for us when we **suffer for righteousness' sake**. God will care for us, especially when we **suffer** unjustly.

i. Jesus spoke of the same attitude: *And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell* (Mat_10:28).

d. **And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled**: The presence or possibility of suffering for doing good should not make us shrink back from doing good. Instead we should give a special place (**sanctify**) to God in our hearts, and always be ready to explain our faith (**give a defense**), always doing it with a right attitude (**meekness and fear**).

i. How can **we always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you**? It can only happen as we spend time in His word.

ii. Peter knew how important it was to **give a defense to everyone who asks you**. He was put on the spot in situations described in Act_2:14-39, Act_3:11-26, Act_4:8-12, and Act_5:29-32. In each situation, Peter relied on the power of the Holy Spirit and was able to **give a defense**.

e. **Those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed**: Our **good conduct**, when we are our good is returned with evil, will prove others wrong in their opinions about us, and it will make them **ashamed** for speaking against our godly lives.

f. **For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil**: None of us want to suffer. But if we must, may it be for **doing good**, not for **doing evil**. Sometimes Christians are obnoxious and offensive, and are made **to suffer** for it. They may wish it were persecution for the same of the gospel, but really it is simply suffering **for doing evil**.

C. Jesus shows the power of suffering for doing good.

1. (1Pe_3:18) Through His godly suffering, Jesus brought us to God.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, a. Jesus **suffered once for sins**. There is no longer any sacrifice, any atonement that can please God. Even our own suffering won't pay for our sins. The price has already been paid.

b. **The just for the unjust:** Jesus is a perfect example of suffering for doing good. He, the **just**, suffered for all of us, **the unjust** - and the purpose of it all was to *bring us to God*, to restore our broken and dead relationship with Him.

i. Since Jesus did all this to **bring us to God**, how wrong it is for us to not come to God in fellowship! The ancient Greek word translated **bring** is the same word used for *access* in Rom_5:2 and Eph_2:18. In ancient literature, the word **bring** was used "of admission to an audience with the Great King." (Blum)

c. **Being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit:** Jesus did die in His body, but was raised from the dead **by the Holy Spirit**. Here, the Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead. It also tells us that the Father raised Jesus from the dead (Rom_6:4), and it says that Jesus raised Himself from the dead (Joh_2:18-22). The resurrection was the work of the Triune God.

2. (1Pe_3:19-20 a) Through godly suffering, Jesus preached to the spirits in prison.

By whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient,

a. **He went and preached to the spirits in prison:** Apparently, this work was done in the period after Jesus' death, but before His first resurrection appearance to the disciples. Jesus went to Hades - the abode of the dead - and **preached to the spirits** there.

b. **Spirits in prison:** Are these **spirits** demonic spirits or human spirits? We know that their disobedience was *in the days of Noah* (1Pe_3:20). We have evidence that this was a time of gross sin for both demons and humans, when there

was an ungodly mingling of humans and demons (Gen_6:1-2).

c. But why would Jesus *preach* to these imprisoned spirits? In all probability, this was *preaching* in the proclamation of God's message, but it was not *evangelism* the proclamation of good news. Jesus probably **preached** a message of *judgment* and final condemnation in light of His finished work on the cross to these disobedient spirits.

i. In doing this, there was a completion in Jesus' triumph over evil, even the evil occurring before the flood.

ii. The Bible says that even those *under the earth* must acknowledge Jesus' ultimate Lordship. Here Jesus was announcing that fact: *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth* (Php_2:10).

d. Some feel that Jesus preached to the people of Noah's time, in Noah's time. But when Peter refers to their imprisonment, he refers to their current state, not their state when Jesus preached to them, as if He preached through the ministries of Noah or Enoch.

i. "This passage, once cleared of misunderstanding, should also function today as an encouragement to us to be bold in our witness (as Noah was), to be confident that, though we may be few, God will certainly save us (as he did Noah), and to remind us that just as certainly as the flood eventually came, so final judgment will certainly come to our world as well, and Christ will ultimately triumph over all evil in the universe." (Grudem)

e. Other feel that this was evangelistic preaching, offering a second chance to those demonic spirits that were imprisoned at the flood. But the Bible knows nothing of such second chances.

i. Hart expresses this view: "Before Christ came, they had not heard the Gospel of God's Reign . . . But at Christ's preaching they repented like the men of Nineveh; for it is said that *angels subjected themselves to Him.*"

3. (1Pe_3:20-22) The salvation of Noah as a picture of baptism.

When once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us; baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

a. **Eight souls, were saved through water:** Peter draws a picture here. Even as Noah's salvation from judgment of God was connected with **water**, so the Christian's salvation connected with the **water**, the water of **baptism**.

i. The water of the flood washed away sin and wickedness, and brought a new world with a fresh start before God.

The water of baptism does the same thing, providing a passage from the old to the new.

b. **Not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God:** But Peter is careful to point out that it isn't the actual water washing of baptism that saves us, but the spiritual reality behind the immersion in water. What really saves us is the **answer of a good conscience toward God**, a conscience made **good** through the completed work of Jesus.

c. **Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God:** We see the completeness of Jesus' work by His exaltation to the **right hand of God** the Father, and the subjection of all created spirits unto Him (**angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him**). So though Jesus suffered for doing good, He had the ultimate triumph. The example of Jesus proves Peter's point in 1Pe_3:9 : when we suffer for doing good, we will inherit a blessing.

(1Pe 3:2) when they see your pure and reverent conduct.3

(1Pe 3:3) Let your⁴ beauty⁵ not be external — the braiding of hair and wearing of gold jewelry⁶ or fine clothes — (1Pe 3:4) but the inner person⁷ of the heart, the lasting beauty of a gentle and tranquil spirit, which is precious in God's sight.

(1Pe 3:5) For in the same way the holy women who hoped in God long ago adorned themselves by being subject to their husbands, (1Pe 3:6) like Sarah who obeyed⁸ Abraham, calling him lord. You become her children⁹ when you do what is good and have no fear in doing so.¹⁰

(1Pe 3:7) Husbands, in the same way, treat your wives with consideration as the weaker partners¹¹ and show them honor as fellow heirs of the grace of life. In this way nothing will hinder your prayers.¹²

(1Pe 3:8) ***Suffering for Doing Good***

Finally, all of you be harmonious,¹³ sympathetic, affectionate, compassionate, and humble.

(1Pe 3:9) Do not return evil for evil or insult for insult, but instead bless¹⁴ others¹⁵ because you were called to inherit a blessing.

(1Pe 3:10) For

the one who wants to love life and see good days must keep ¹⁶ ***his tongue from evil and his lips from uttering***

deceit.

(1Pe 3:11) ***And he must turn away from evil and do good;***

he must seek peace and pursue it.

(1Pe 3:12) ***For the eyes of the Lord are ¹⁷ upon the righteous and his ears are open to their prayer.***

But the Lord's face is against those who do evil. ¹⁸

(1Pe 3:13) For¹⁹ who is going to harm you if you are devoted to what is good?

(1Pe 3:14) But in fact, if you happen to suffer²⁰ for doing what is right,²¹ you are blessed. ***But do not be terrified of them ²² or be shaken. ²³***

(1Pe 3:15) But set Christ²⁴ apart²⁵ as Lord in your hearts and always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks about the hope you possess.²⁶

(1Pe 3:16) Yet do it with courtesy and respect,²⁷ keeping a good conscience, so that those who slander your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame when they accuse you.²⁸

(1Pe 3:17) For it is better to suffer for doing good, if God wills it,²⁹ than for doing evil.

(1Pe 3:18) ³⁰ Because Christ also suffered³¹ once for sins, *the just for the unjust,*³²

to bring you to God,

by being put to death in the flesh

but³³ by being made alive in the spirit.³⁴

(1Pe 3:19) In it³⁵ he went and preached to the spirits in prison,³⁶

(1Pe 3:20) after they were disobedient long ago³⁷ when God patiently waited³⁸ in the days of Noah as an ark was being constructed. In the ark³⁹ a few, that is eight souls, were delivered through water.

(1Pe 3:21) And this prefigured baptism, which now saves you⁴⁰ — not the washing off of physical dirt⁴¹ but the pledge⁴² of a good conscience to God — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (1Pe 3:22) who went into heaven and is at the right hand of God⁴³ with angels and authorities and powers subject to him.⁴⁴

(1Pe 4:1) So, since Christ suffered¹ in the flesh, you also arm yourselves with the same attitude, because the one who has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin,²

(Guzik)

1Pe 4:1-19

1 Peter 4 - SERVING GOD IN THE LAST DAYS

A. Attitudes for end-times believers.

1. (1Pe_4:1-2) In the last days, Christians should have an attitude of commitment.

Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

a. **Since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind:** The commitment God calls us to have is nothing isn't greater than the commitment Jesus had in enduring suffering for our salvation. In the last days, we need to have a commitment to God that will endure through great struggles.

i. Jesus communicated the same idea when He told us that anyone who would come after Him must take up his cross and follow (Mat_16:24). Taking up the cross meant that you were committed and not looking back!

ii. **Arm yourself with the same mind:** Many of us are defeated in our battle against sin because we refuse to

sacrifice anything in the battle. We only want victory if it comes easily to us. Jesus called us to have the kind of attitude that would sacrifice in the battle against sin (Mat_5:29-30).

b. **He who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin:** When a person has suffered physical persecution for the sake of Jesus, it almost always profoundly changes their outlook regarding sin and the pursuit of the lusts of the flesh. He is more likely to **live the rest of his time in the flesh not for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.**

i. “Whoever has suffered for doing right, and has still gone on obeying God in spite of the suffering it involved, has made a clear break with sin.” (Grudem)

2. (1Pe_4:3-6) In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of wisdom.

For we *have spent* enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles; when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with *them* in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of *you*. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

a. **For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles:** Peter realizes we all spent enough time living like the world. Now we are called to live like Christians. It is a profound, and foolish, waste of time for Christians to live like the world, and we must simply stop being double-minded and start living as Christians.

i. Sadly, many Christians (in their heart of hearts) think that they have *not spent enough* time doing the will of the ungodly. They want to experience more of the world before they make a full commitment to godliness. This is a tragic

what a mistake, and takes a path that leads *away* from eternal life.

b. **They think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation:** When the world looks at our godly living, they **think it strange** that we do not follow them in their **flood of dissipation** (wastefulness). If life lived after the flesh is anything, it is a *waste*.

i. **Speaking evil of you:** When we don't participate in the sin around us, we convict those who practice their sin, and they don't like that - so they speak evil of us.

ii. "It does not matter how your good deeds are received by men. If you are like God, you will find them received with contempt and ingratitude." (Meyer)

c. **Lewdness** means to live without any sense of moral restraint, especially in regard to sexual immorality and violence.

When we look at this list (**lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries**), we see just how little fallen man has progressed in the last 2,000 years.

d. The magnitude of their foolishness will be displayed on they day when **they will give an account to Him who is ready to judge**. Even if one seems to live the "good life" living by the world's rules, their life will be a waste in the measure of eternity.

e. **For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead:** Peter also says that because of this eternal judgment the gospel was preached to the **dead**. The righteous **dead** know, and live in constant awareness of, the reality of eternity - and are rewarded by this understanding as they **live according to God in the spirit**.

i. Peter has already told us that Jesus preached to the *spirits in prison*, preaching a message of judgment (1Pe_3:19). Apparently during this same time, Jesus also preached a message of salvation to the faithful dead in Abraham's

Bosom (Luk_16:22) who anticipated the work of the Messiah for them.

ii. This preaching **to those who are dead** was not the offer of a second chance, but the completion of the salvation of those who had been faithful to God under their first chance.

iii. In doing this, Jesus fulfilled the promised that He would lead *captivity captive* (Psa_66:18; Eph_4:8) and would *proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound* (Isa_61:1 and Luk_4:18).

3. (1Pe_4:7) In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of serious prayer.

But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

a. **The end of all things is at hand:** If we really believe that we live in the last days, it is all the more appropriate that we give ourselves to prayer (**therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers**).

i. Many Christians who believe that Jesus is coming soon based on prophecy charts and political events fail to apply that belief the proper way. They fail to applying themselves to more diligent prayer.

b. **Therefore be serious . . . in your prayers:** We must give ourselves to **serious** prayer. As we see the weight of eternity rushing towards us, we dare not take the need for prayer lightly.

c. **Therefore be . . . watchful in your prayers:** We must give ourselves to **watchful** prayer, primarily having our hearts and minds watching and ready for the return of Jesus Christ. But this also means watching ourselves and watching this world, measuring our readiness for Jesus' coming.

4. (1Pe_4:8-11) In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of love.

And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold

grace of God. If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

a. **Above all things have fervent love for one another:**

If these are the last days, how much more important is it to love those you are going to spend eternity with? In light of eternity, we must have **fervent love for one another**.

b. **For love will cover a multitude of sins:** Love does **cover a multitude of sins**, both the sins of the one loving and the sins of the one who is being loved.

i. "Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offences, and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten. But where love is lacking, every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding, and conflicts about - to Satan's perverse delight." (Grudem)

c. **Be hospitable to one another without grumbling:**

Love will show itself in hospitality. Christians should often open their homes to others and doing it all **without grumbling**.

d. **As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another:** Love will show itself as we give to the church family what God has given us as gifts. As we do so, we are **good stewards** of the many-faceted (**manifold**) **grace of God** given to us.

i. In 1Co_15:10, Paul makes it clear that he was what he was only by God's grace. But at the same time, *His grace toward me was not in vain* because Paul put his own God-inspired efforts to work with God's grace. The idea is that if we are **bad stewards of the manifold grace of God**, it is as if that grace was given to us in vain. That grace is wasted, because it only comes *to* us, and doesn't move *through* us.

ii. "*Manifold grace* is many-coloured grace. As when a ray of light breaks into a spray of many hues, so each of us

receives God's grace at a different angle, and flashes it back broken up into some fresh colour." (Meyer)

e. **If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies:** Every part is important, each has its job to do. A man was rebuilding the engine to his lawn mower, and when he finished, he had one small part left over, and he couldn't remember where it went. He started the engine and it ran great, so he figured that the part was useless - until he tried to stop the lawn mower, and it wouldn't stop! Even the smallest, seemingly least important part of the body of Christ is important.

f. As we serve **one another**, we do it with the strength God provides, **the ability which God supplies** - so that to Him **belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever.**

B. Understanding your time of trial.

1. (1Pe_4:12-13) Enduring trials with the right attitude.

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

a. **Concerning the fiery trial which is to try you:** Instead of thinking of trials (even **fiery** trials) as **strange** occurrences, we see them as ways to **partake of Christ's sufferings**. And if we partake of His sufferings, we will also partake of His **glory** and **joy**.

i. Peter once told Jesus to avoid the suffering of the cross (Mar_8:32-33). "Once it seemed strange to the Apostle Peter that his Master should think of suffering. Now he thinks it strange that He could have imagined anything else." (Meyer)

b. **Partake of Christ's sufferings:** We can only **partake** of Jesus' sufferings because He partook of our humanity and sufferings. He became a man and suffered so that our suffering wouldn't be meaningless. It is good to share *anything* with Jesus, even His suffering.

c. **Rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy:** Our tendency is to embrace the glory and the joy, and to avoid any sharing of Jesus'

suffering. Or, we morbidly fixate on the suffering and forget that it is but a necessary prelude to the **glory** and **joy**.

i. We should never deny the place of suffering in building godliness in the Christian life. Though there is much needless pain we bear through lack of knowledge or faith, there is also necessary suffering. If suffering was a suitable tool to teach Jesus (Heb_5:8), it is a suitable tool to teach His servants.

d. **To the extent** implies a measure. Those who have suffered more in Jesus will rejoice more at His coming in **glory**.

2. (1Pe_4:14-16) The difference between suffering as a Christian and suffering as an evildoer.

If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

a. **If you are reproached for the name of Christ:** Suffering for **the name of Christ** is a blessing, because it shows that we really are following Jesus, and that we suffer because we are identified with Him.

i. Peter, as much as anyone, would recognize that such times rarely are felt as a blessing at the moment, and that such times only feel like agony. Yet God knows how to bring blessing out of suffering and weakness.

b. **On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified:** We expect the world to blaspheme Jesus. But He should always be **glorified** among Christians.

c. **Let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody:** Suffering as **an evildoer** is deserved and brings shame to the name of Jesus. Peter recognizes that not all suffering that Christians experience is suffering in **the name of Jesus**.

i. We understand when Peter writes about the suffering that might come to the **murderer**, the **thief**, or the **evildoer**. Yet we shouldn't be surprised that he also includes the **busybody in other people's matters**. Such people *do* suffer a lot of grief and pain, but not for the sake of Jesus!

d. **If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed:** Suffering as a Christian is nothing to be ashamed about, even though the world may despise the suffering Christian. Instead, we should **glorify God *in*** these matters.

i. We don't glorify God for suffering. But we do glorify Him **in** suffering, and we glorify Him for what He will accomplish in us and through us with the suffering.

e. **As a Christian:** "The word *Christian* is found in the New Testament only here and at Act_11:26; Act_26:28; it means 'follower of Christ' - not 'little Christ', as some popular explanations claim." (Grudem)

i. Christians were first known as "disciples," "believers," "the Lord's disciples," or "those who belonged to the Way" before they were known as Christians, first at Act_11:26.

3. (1Pe_4:17-19) Committing your soul to God in the midst of suffering.

For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

a. **For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God:** In the context of suffering, Peter tells us

that judgment begins at the house of God. God uses suffering as a **judgment** (in a positive, purifying sense) for Christians (**the house of God**) now.

i. Now is our time of *fiery trial* (1Pe_4:12); the ungodly will have their fire later. The fire we endure now purifies us; the fire the ungodly will endure will punish them.

ii. We must always remember that there is never any punishment from God for us in our sufferings, only purification. For the Christian, the issue of *punishment* was settled once and for all at the cross, where Jesus endured all the punishment the Christian could ever face from God.

iii. The same fire that consumes straw will purify gold. The fire is the same, but its *purpose* in application is different, and its *effect* is different upon the straw and the gold. Even so, Christians do suffer some of the same things the ungodly do, yet the *purpose* of God is different, and the *effect* is different.

b. If it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Peter's sobering application is clear: if this is what God's *children* experience, what will become of those who have made themselves His enemies? How can they ever hope to stand before the judgment and wrath of God?

i. Christians can rejoice that the sufferings they face in this life are the worst they will ever face, throughout all eternity. We have seen the worst; those who reject Jesus Christ have seen the *best* of life their eternal existence will ever see.

c. Those who suffer according to the will of God: Peter again draws a distinction between those **who suffer according to the will of God** and those who suffer otherwise. Not all suffering is the will of God.

d. Commit their souls to Him: **Commit** is a technical word used for leaving money on deposit with a trusted friend.

Such a trust was regarded as one of the most sacred things in life, and the friend was bound by all honor to return the

money intact. It is the very word Jesus used when He said, *Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.* (Luk_23:46) i. So when Christians **commit their souls to Him**, they leave their souls in a safe place. God is **a faithful Creator**, and we can give ourselves to Him as pliable clay in His hands.

e. **Faithful Creator**: So much of the agony we put ourselves through in times of trial and suffering has to do with our disregard of God's faithfulness, or of His place as Creator. He *is* our sovereign **Creator**, with the right to do with us as He pleases. Yet He *is* **faithful**, and will only do what is ultimately best for us.

(1Pe 4:2) in that he spends the rest of his time³ on earth concerned about the will of God and not human desires.

(1Pe 4:3) For the time that has passed was sufficient for you to do what the non-Christians⁴ desire.⁵ You lived then⁶ in debauchery, evil desires, drunkenness, carousing, drinking bouts,⁷ and wanton idolatries.⁸

(1Pe 4:4) So⁹ they are astonished¹⁰ when you do not rush with them into the same flood of wickedness, and they vilify you.¹¹

(1Pe 4:5) They will face a reckoning before¹² Jesus Christ¹³ who stands ready to judge the living and the dead.

(1Pe 4:6) Now it was for this very purpose¹⁴ that the gospel was preached to those who are now dead,¹⁵ so that though¹⁶ they were judged in the flesh¹⁷ by human standards¹⁸ they may live spiritually¹⁹ by God's standards.²⁰

(1Pe 4:7) ***Service, Suffering, and Judgment***

For the culmination of all things is near. So be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of prayer.²¹

(1Pe 4:8) Above all keep²² your love for one another fervent,²³ because ***love covers a multitude of sins.*** ²⁴

(1Pe 4:9) Show hospitality²⁵ to one another without complaining.

(1Pe 4:10) Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another²⁶ as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

(1Pe 4:11) Whoever speaks, let it be with²⁷ God's words.²⁸ Whoever serves, do so with the strength²⁹ that God supplies, so that in everything God will be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong³⁰ the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

(1Pe 4:12) Dear friends, do not be astonished³¹ that a trial by fire is occurring among you,³² as though something strange were happening to you.

(1Pe 4:13) But rejoice in the degree that you have shared in the sufferings of Christ, so that when his glory is revealed³³ you may also rejoice and be glad.³⁴

(1Pe 4:14) If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory,³⁵ who is ***the Spirit of God***,³⁶ ***rests***
³⁷ on you.

(1Pe 4:15) But let none of you suffer as a murderer or thief or criminal or as a troublemaker.³⁸

(1Pe 4:16) But if you suffer as a Christian,³⁹ do not be ashamed, but glorify⁴⁰ God that you bear such a name.⁴¹

(1Pe 4:17) For it is time for judgment to begin, starting with the house⁴² of God. And if it starts with us, what will be the fate⁴³ of those who are disobedient to the gospel of God?

(1Pe 4:18) And ***if the righteous are barely saved, what will become of*** ⁴⁴ ***the ungodly and sinners?*** ⁴⁵

(1Pe 4:19) So then let those who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator as they do good.⁴⁶

(1Pe 5:1) ***Leading and Living in God's Flock***

So as your fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings and as one who shares in the glory that will be revealed, I urge the elders among you: (Guzik)

1Pe 5:1-14

1 Peter 5 - FOR SHEPHERDS AND SHEEP

A. Elders should be faithful shepherds.

1. (1Pe_5:1) A call to elders.

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: a. **The elders who are among you I exhort:** Peter will give a word of exhortation to **the elders who are among** the Christians reading this letter. These elders have special responsibilities that Peter will address.

i. The idea of the **elder** came into church life from Jewish culture (Exo_3:16; Exo_12:21; Exo_19:7). The word “**elder**” simply speaks of the maturity and wisdom that an older person should have, making them qualified for leadership. In its application, it is more about wisdom and maturity than age.

ii. It was the practice of Paul and Barnabas to appoint elders in the churches they had founded (Act_14:23). There was also the development of the office of pastor, who was essentially a teaching elder (1Ti_5:17) who appointed and guided elders and other leaders (1Ti_3:1-13, 2Ti_2:2, Tit_1:5-9).

b. **I who am a fellow elder:** Peter is qualified to speak because he is **a fellow elder**. Though Peter was clearly the prominent disciple among the twelve, he claims no special privilege or position, such as the “Pope” of the early church. Instead, Peter sees himself only as one **fellow elder** among all the elders in the church.

c. **A witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:** Peter is qualified to speak because he is a **witness** of Jesus’ sufferings, when he saw Jesus’ torture and crucifixion, and he was a **partaker** of Jesus’ glory, probably when he saw Jesus’ transfiguration.

i. Peter wrote about suffering and glory in the Christian life (1Pe_4:12-13). Because Peter saw both suffering and glory

in the life of Jesus, he can speak with the authority of an eyewitness.

2. (1Pe_5:2-3) What leaders in the church must do.

Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; a. They must **shepherd the flock of God**. Peter seems to be remembering Jesus' three-part commission to him in Joh_21:15-17. In that passage, Jesus told Peter to show his love for Jesus by feeding and tending Jesus' sheep.

i. How does a spiritual **shepherd** do his job? The first job is to *feed* the sheep. Jesus emphasized this to Peter in Joh_21:15-17. Another aspect of the job is to *tend* the sheep, which means protecting, guiding, nurturing, and caring for the sheep.

ii. The most important "tool" to **shepherd the flock of God** is a heart like Jesus', that is willing to give one's life for the sheep, and who genuinely cares about and is interested in them (Joh_10:11-14).

b. **Serving as overseers**: For Peter, the job of being a shepherd can also be understood as being an **overseer**. This word for leadership comes to the church from Greek culture, and it means someone who watches over, a manager, or a supervisor (Act_20:28, 1Ti_3:1-2, Tit_1:7).

c. **Not by compulsion but willingly**: Shepherds should not do their job by **compulsion**, as if they were being forced into a task they really hated. Instead, they should serve God and His people **willingly**, from a heart that loves sheep and wants to serve.

i. "None of God's soldiers are mercenaries or pressed men: they are all volunteers. We must have a shepherd's heart if we would do a shepherd's work." (Meyer)

d. **Not for dishonest gain but eagerly**: Shepherds should not do their job for **dishonest gain**. The gain is **dishonest** because it was their motive for serving as shepherds.

Instead, they should serve **eagerly**, willing to serve apart from financial compensation.

e. **Nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock:** Shepherds should not do their job as **lords**, because the sheep do not belong to them. The sheep are **entrusted** to them. Instead, shepherds are to serve by being **examples**, not dictators.

i. **Nor as being lords** shows that in the mind of Peter, shepherds had significant authority in the early church. If the office of shepherd was so powerless that a shepherd didn't rule and lead, then there was little potential for **being lords**. But because Peter gives this warning, it shows there was the potential for lording over.

ii. The sobering fact is that pastors *are* **examples to the flock**, whether they intend to be or not. It is interesting to see how a congregation takes on the personality of its pastor in good ways and bad ways.

3. (1Pe_5:4) The reward for leaders in the church.

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

a. **When the Chief Shepherd appears:** Peter reminds shepherds in the church that they will answer one day to their **Chief Shepherd**, who will want to know what they did with His flock!

i. It is important for shepherds - pastors - to realize that they lead *Jesus'* sheep. *He* is the Shepherd, *He* is the Overseer (1Pe_2:25). In this sense, the Christian shepherd doesn't work for the sheep, he works for the **Chief Shepherd**.

b. **You will receive a crown of glory:** Faithful shepherds are promised a **crown of glory**, but not like the crown of leaves given to ancient Olympic champions. This crown will **not fade away**.

i. Crowns are not only for shepherds, but for everyone who was faithful to Jesus and who did what He called them to do (1Co_9:25, 2Ti_4:8, Jam_1:12).

B. Everyone should be humble and watchful.

1. (1Pe_5:5-7) A promise for the humble.

Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

a. **Likewise you younger people:** Peter begins this word of humility to **you younger people**, in contrast to the elders he has just addressed. But he soon realizes that it is of application to **all of you**. This word to **be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility** applies to everyone, but perhaps *especially* to the young.

b. **Clothed with humility:** **Humility** is demonstrated by submission. It is the ability to cheerfully put away our own agenda for God’s, even if God’s agenda is expressed through another person.

c. **Be clothed with humility:** “**Be clothed**” translates a rare word that refers to a slave putting on an apron before serving, even as Jesus did before washing the disciple’s feet (Joh_13:4).

d. **For “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”** Humility is essential to our relationship with God. If we want to walk in God’s **grace** (His unmerited favor) then we must lay aside our pride and be **humble** - not only to Him but also to one another.

i. Grace and pride are eternal enemies. Pride demands that God bless me in light of what I think I deserve. Grace will only deal with me on the basis what is in God (love), not on the basis of anything in me.

i. “Pride is one of the most detestable of sins; yet does it find lodgment in earnest souls, though we often speak of it by some lighter name. We call it - independence, self-reliance. We do not always discern it in the hurt feeling, which retires into itself, and nurses its sorrows in a sulk . . . We are proud of our humility, vain of our meekness; and, putting on the

saintliest look, we wonder whether all around are not admiring us for our lowliness.” (Meyer) e. **That He may exalt you in due time:** If God has us in a humble place at the present time, we must submit to God’s plan. He knows the **due time** to exalt us, though we often think we know that time better than God does.

f. **Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you:** True humility is shown by our ability to cast our **care upon** God. It is proud presumption to take things into our own worry and care about things that God has promised to take care of (Mat_5:31-34).

i. Sometimes we need to call worry and inappropriate care exactly what it is: pride and unbelief, and a desire to usurp God’s place as our providing, caring Father.

ii. **He cares for you:** At their best moments, the religions of Greek culture could imagine a God who was good.

Yet they never came to the place where they believed in a God who *cared*. The God of the Bible - the God who is really there - is a God who **cares for you**.

iii. We often judge the parents by the children. When a child of God is full of worry and fear, doesn’t the world have reason to believe that their Father in heaven doesn’t care for them? Our worry and fear reflects poorly - in an unfair way - upon God.

2. (1Pe_5:8-9) Be watchful for the devil.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

a. **Your adversary the devil walks about:** We must remain clear-headed (**sober**) and watchful (**vigilant**), because Satan has not yet been bound and restrained for 1,000 years as Rev_20:1-2 says he will be. At the present time, **the devil walks about**.

b. **Like a roaring lion:** For Christians, Satan is a **lion** who may roar but who has been de-fanged at the cross (Col_2:15).

Yet the sound of his roar - his deceptive lies - are still potent and he has the power to **devour** souls and rob Christians of effectiveness.

c. **Resist him, steadfast in the faith:** The secret of spiritual warfare is simple, **steadfast**, *resistance*. As we are **steadfast in the faith**, we resist the devil lies and threats and intimidation.

i. Significantly, Peter doesn't tell us to cast demons out of other Christians. He simply challenges individual Christians to deal with Satan as a conquered foe who can and must be personally resisted.

ii. **Resist** comes from two Greek words: *stand* and *against*. Peter tells us to *stand against* the devil. Satan can be set running by the resistance of the lowliest believer who comes in the authority of what Jesus did on the cross.

d. **Knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world:** We also take comfort in knowing that we are never alone in our spiritual warfare. Our brothers and sisters in Jesus have fought, and are fighting, the same battles.

3. (1Pe_5:10-11) A prayer for their spiritual strengthening.

But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*. To Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

a. **May the God of all grace . . . perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you:** Peter, knowing the suffering and danger Christians face, can only conclude with *prayer*. He asks God to do His work of perfecting, establishing, strengthening, and settling.

i. These things are God's work in us and through us. Peter personally knew the futility of trying to face suffering and danger in one's own strength. His own failure taught him the

need for constant reliance on God's work in our lives, so he prays for his dear Christian friends.

ii. **After you have suffered a while:** We almost want to ask Peter, "Why did you say that?" But the truth remains. We are only **called . . . to His eternal glory . . . after you have suffered a while**. We wish we were called to His eternal glory on the "no suffering" plan. But God uses suffering to **perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle** us.

b. **To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever:** The God who can do this great work in our lives is worthy of our praise!

4. (1Pe_5:12-14) Conclusion to the letter.

By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. She who is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, greets you; and *so does* Mark my son. Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

a. **By Silvanus . . . I have written to you:** This portion was probably written by Peter's own hand, after he (according to the custom of the day) had dictated the bulk of the letter to **Silvanus**. This man **Silvanus** is probably the same one known as Silas in many of Paul's letters.

b. **This is the true grace of God in which you stand:** Peter sums up his message as an exhortation to understand and recognize **the true grace of God in which you stand**. We must understand not only what God's grace is, but that grace is our place of present standing before Him.

c. **She who is in Babylon . . . greets you:** **She** probably refers to the church, which in Greek is in the feminine. Peter apparently writes from **Babylon**. This may be the literal city of Babylon (which still existed in Peter's day), or it may be a symbolic way of referring to either Rome or Jerusalem. These were two cities that in Peter's day were famous for their

wickedness and spiritual rebellion, just like ancient **Babylon**. In any regard, this is one church greeting another.

d. **So does Mark my son:** This verse connects **Mark** with Peter, apparently the same Mark of Act_12:12; Act_12:25; Act_15:37-39. When the style and perspective of the Gospel of Mark are taken into account, many to believe that Peter was Mark's primary source of information for his gospel.

e. **Greet one another with a kiss of love:** Peter concludes with a command to greet and display God's love to one another, and by pronouncing a blessing of **peace**. These two things - **love** for each other and **peace** - are especially necessary for those who suffer and live in dangerous times.

(1Pe 5:2) Give a shepherd's care to¹ God's flock among you, exercising oversight² not merely as a duty³ but willingly under God's direction,⁴ not for shameful profit but eagerly.

(1Pe 5:3) And do not lord it over⁵ those entrusted to you,⁶ but be examples to the flock.

(1Pe 5:4) Then⁷ when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that never fades away.

(1Pe 5:5) In the same way, you who are younger,⁸ be subject to the elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God ***opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.*** ⁹

(1Pe 5:6) And God will exalt you in due time,¹⁰ if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand¹¹

(1Pe 5:7) by casting¹² all your cares¹³ on him because he cares for you.

(1Pe 5:8) Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, *like a roaring lion*, ¹⁴ is on the prowl looking for someone¹⁵ to devour.

(1Pe 5:9) Resist him,¹⁶ strong in your faith, because you know¹⁷ that your brothers and sisters¹⁸ throughout the world¹⁹ are enduring²⁰

the same kinds of suffering.²¹

(1Pe 5:10) And, after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ²² will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.²³

(1Pe 5:11) To him belongs²⁴ the power forever. Amen.

(1Pe 5:12) ***Final Greetings***

Through Silvanus,²⁵ whom I know to be a faithful brother,²⁶ I have written to you briefly, in order to encourage you and testify²⁷

that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.²⁸

(1Pe 5:13) The church²⁹ in Babylon,³⁰ chosen together with you,³¹ greets you, and so does Mark, my son.

(1Pe 5:14) Greet one another with a loving kiss.³² Peace to all of you who are in Christ.³³